



Ride On Newsletter

March 2023

March 2023 Marks the 48th Anniversary of Ride On



Montgomery County's Ride On bus service celebrates 48 years in service this month! The Ride On bus system is the second largest in the region, and one of the busiest, operating 7 days a week on over 80 routes.

Making its debut in 1975 with just 20 buses, Ride On was the first county-run bus service in the Washington, DC area, designed to provide service in Takoma Park and Silver Spring where large buses could not travel. Within weeks of its introduction, the bus service was transporting twice the number of riders originally projected – nearly 2,000 passengers each day. Three years after Ride On started service, in 1978, Montgomery County expanded the popular bus service to 22 routes with 79 buses. This move increased ridership from about 4,000 passengers per day to more than 12,000. Eventually, the bus service extended to include Takoma Park, Langley Park, White Flint, and Wheaton, with Silver Spring Metro station as the focal point.

In 2000, Ride On celebrated its 25th anniversary by painting two buses uniquely to commemorate the milestone and offered 25-cent daily fares and \$1.50 regional passes for all passengers for the rest of the year. In 2006, Ride On began accepting SmarTrip® cards. In addition, Ride On debuted its first hybrid-electric buses and had 13 operating by the end of 2007. In recent years, Ride On has expanded to operate three additional services: Ride On extRa, Ride On Flex and Flash Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Ride On's first four all-electric buses began service in 2020 in Silver Spring/Takoma Park. The electric buses can run a full day on a single charge and offer sustainable mobility solutions, since they significantly reduce GHG emissions, air and noise pollution, and dependence on fossil fuels.

Ride On has also introduced new initiatives as part of its dedication to service improvements. The Ride Reimagined Study aims to take a critical look at the County's current and future bus network and transit systems, including Metrobus and the planned Purple Line, to pinpoint where improvements can be made, based on experience and feedback from the community. Another program is the Bus Priority Program which was created by a group of MCDOT and Montgomery County staff members in 2021. The program focuses on advancements for bus operations including dedicated bus lanes, bus signal prioritization and enhanced bus stops. The Great Seneca Transit Network which will create hubs at Shady Grove Metrorail Station, the Universities at Shady Grove, and Adventist Shady Grove Hospital is also currently in progress. Slated to start in 2024, this service which will be branded as Ride On extRa and will include 11 bus stops, dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority at seven intersections and new bike and pedestrian connections. Today, Ride On is on track to achieve an emissions-free bus fleet by 2035.

What is the Great Seneca Transit Network (GSTN)?

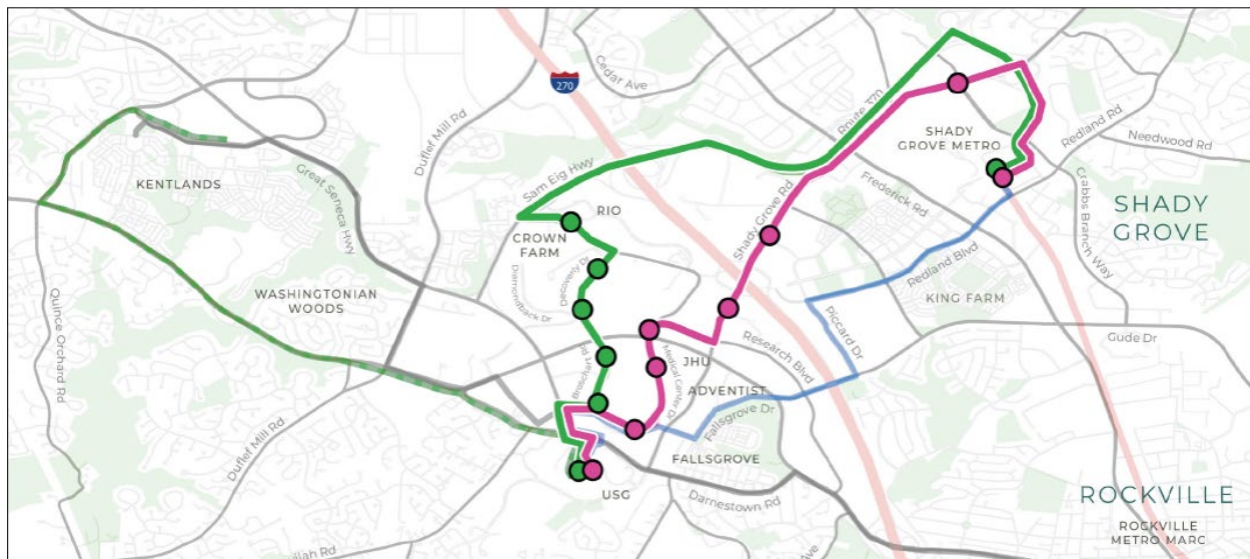


The Great Seneca Transit Network (GSTN) will provide frequent transit options, improving mobility and access to crucial jobs in the healthcare, biotech, and education sectors. GSTN is a crucial factor in supporting the continued growth of the burgeoning medical sciences industry by providing new efficient options to travel. GSTN will improve transit equity for all residents by connecting riders to jobs, healthcare providers, and medical facilities without auto use.

- The GSTN is a planned MCDOT/Ride On extRa bus service which will provide additional public transportation options to the communities in and around the Shady Grove Medical Center, Rio, and adjacent properties.
 - The service will provide frequent and reliable connections between Shady Grove Station, Shady Grove Medical Center, Universities of Shady Grove, and surrounding areas.
 - Service will include timing to support student and medical shift schedules

There are multiple phases. Phase 1 A is approved and includes:

- Two routes: Lime and Pink
- Enhanced bus shelters
- Dedicated bus and bike lanes
- Signal priority for buses at key intersections
- Pedestrian access
- Sustainability is important to MCDOT. Along with reducing the number of single passenger cars on the road by expanding Great Seneca Ride On extRa service, MCDOT is transitioning to a zero-emission fleet with new buses and upgraded facilities



For more information, visit <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/GST/index.html>.

Feature Interview with Ken Sloate - Budget Manager, Division of Transit Services



Tell us how long you have been with MCDOT and describe your career path within MCDOT.

I have worked seventeen years in the Transit Services Division. In February 2006, I began working as the division's grant manager (management services section). This position is responsible for managing the division's grants, applying for new grant opportunities, and ensuring compliance with local, State and Federal requirements. As the grant manager, I had close communication with transit, fleet, and finance staff. There is also a lot of close coordination with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). MTA directs over \$40 million in Federal/State grant funds to transit services.

After working on grants for several years, I worked as the Transit Services contract manager. This position required a lot of interaction with transit program managers across all the different sections (Technology Services, Planning/Implementation, Enhanced Mobility, etc.), internal agencies (Office of Procurement, Office of the County Attorney) and interacting with multiple vendors. The contract manager supports multiple programs by ensuring RFPs/IFBs are issued, and transit contracts (bus advertising, bus schedule printing, bus washdown, bus shelter maintenance, Call n Ride/Medicaid services, etc.) remain current.

For the last six years, I have worked as the Transit Services budget manager. This budget manager is responsible for the preparation and monitoring of the operating and capital budgets. Transit Services has multiple capital projects, including those that fund new and replacement Ride On buses, bus stop improvements and the ITS project that is implementing the new Computer Aided Dispatch/Automatic Vehicle Location (CAD/AVL) system. The Fiscal Year 2023 transit services operating budget is \$172,950,321. Although the budget provides the resources for division operations, it is the hard-working transit staff that directly deliver services to County residents.

Please describe the day-to-day activities pertaining to your work.

Every day, I monitor the current fiscal year (2023) budget (personnel cost, operating expenses). Over the week, I am reviewing different aspects of the three main Transit Services budget programs (Transit Services, Transit Services General Administration and Community Mobility). In addition, I need to review capital budget items, respond to budget inquiries, and reach out to staff to discuss budget items.

Daily activities also frequently change based upon the budget cycle. The County's budget is on a July 1 to June 30 cycle. The next fiscal year budget is prepared in late September/October. The budget submittal is a lot of work and a stressful time. The submittal includes competition items/initiatives that are considered across departments. The Transit Services budget is reviewed by the DOT director's office before it is submitted. After budget submittal, OMB holds a series of meetings with various departments. During January and February, the Office of Management & Budget presents their recommendations to the County Executive (CE). The CE then reviews and makes final budget decisions. Final budget decisions are loaded into a separate budget system, so the budget is ready to be sent to the County Council.

On March 15, 2023, the County Executive will announce the Fiscal Year 2024 recommended County budget. The budget is transmitted to the Council for their review. During April and May, the Council holds budget hearings and makes their final budget decisions right before Memorial Day.

What other organizations do you interface with to ensure successful operations?

Generally, the budget work is done through communication within Transit Services, the Department of Transportation and other County departments.

What are the most challenging parts of your job?

The most challenging part of the job is responding to quick deadlines and turnaround times. The Office of Management & Budget has strict budget deadlines throughout the fiscal year and requires the department to respond quickly to its budget inquiries.

However, the most challenging time of the year, is the fiscal year-end closeout. There is a lot of work that is required of all transit staff, especially the management services section. During June and July, there is a tremendous amount of work that needs to be completed to close a current year budget, and to start a new budget.

What's the best part of your job?

The best part of the job is working with other Transit Services staff. I am fortunate to work with a dedicated group of professionals. I enjoy working with transit staff to move new initiatives forward.

How does your role impact the operation of Transit Services in the County?

As part of the overall transit team, the budget manager ensures that adequate resources are directed toward transit services currently being delivered and for changes in transit service delivery. The budget manager financially implements the public policy changes decided by elected officials.

For example, when the FLASH service was added, there was a need for additional bus operators, support positions, and operating expenses (e.g. motor pool). The additional personnel costs and operating expenses were added to the Transit Services budget. Once added to the budget, the new positions may be hired, so services may be delivered. The budget manager also points out the need for budget adjustments in current fiscal-year budgets when costs may be projected to exceed budgeted resources.

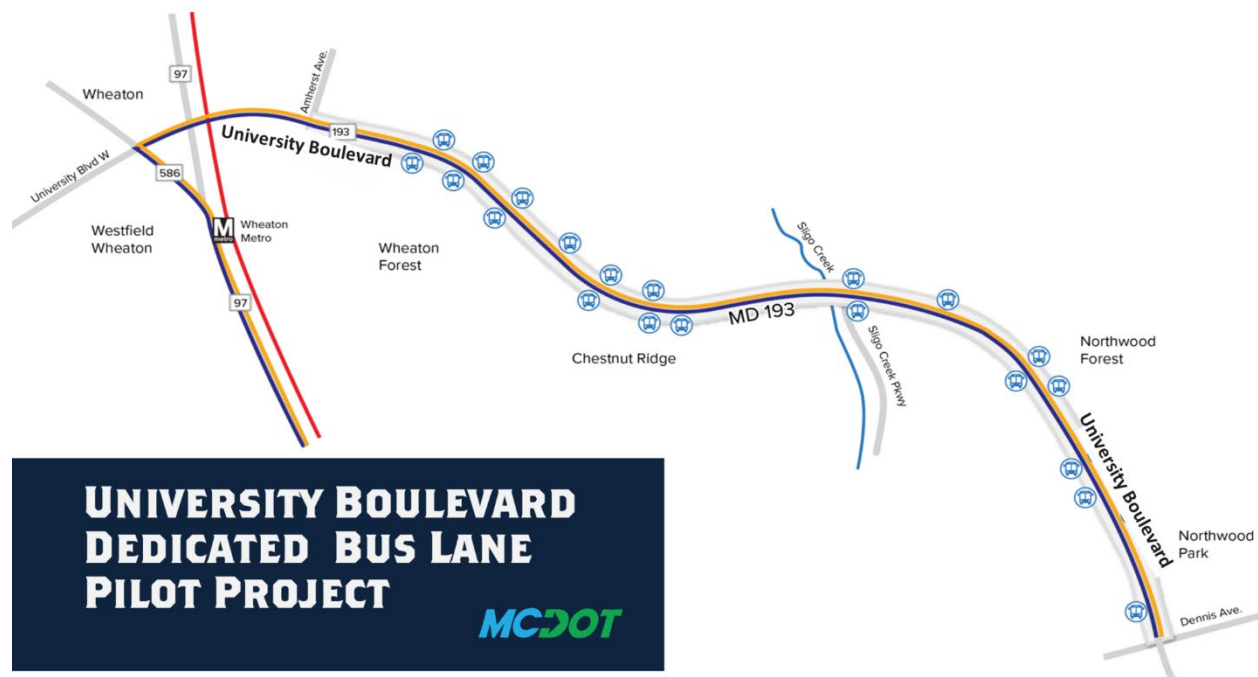
What experience and personal characteristics are the best matches for this role?

As a budget manager, it is important to have financial skills and experience. However, it is equally important to understand how the budget affects overall operations and service delivery. Budgets are not just number on a page. They represent the hard work of staff dedicated to delivering transit services to County residents.

If you could improve one thing about your job, what would it be?

Better communication between County departments.

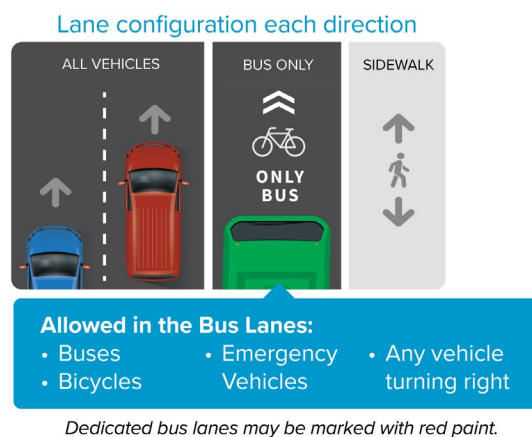
MCDOT to Hold a Virtual Community Meeting on the Proposed University Boulevard Dedicated Bus Lane Pilot Project on Thursday, March 30



On Thursday, March 30 starting at 6 p.m., the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will hold an online public meeting to discuss a new dedicated bus lane pilot project along the University Boulevard (MD 193) corridor between Amherst and Dennis Avenues in Silver Spring. If supported, the bus lane will launch this summer/fall. This dedicated bus lane, shared with bikes and emergency vehicles, will reduce traffic congestion for buses on the route and provide faster and more reliable service for riders. The meeting will share information, answer questions and allow for MCDOT to receive community feedback.

The bus lane will be clearly identified with signs and pavement markings, and there will be no changes to existing parking or loading.

MCDOT provides for the planning, design and construction of improvements to bus service. The [Bus Priority Project](#) includes multiple projects that improve local bus timing, ease of access and safety such as marked dedicated bus lanes; queue jumps; passenger boarding and alighting improvements; implementation of transit signal priority; enhanced bus stops; and other similar improvements that will increase reliability and result in faster buses throughout Montgomery County.



Dedicated Bus Lanes have been implemented on [Crystal Rock Drive and Aircraft Road](#) in Germantown and are also being proposed for Georgia Avenue between [16th St. NW and Wayne Avenue](#) in Silver Spring. Additional dedicated bus lanes are planned for other areas in Montgomery County.

[Online registration](#) is required to attend. An invitation to participate will be emailed to registrants the morning of the meeting. Meeting information, including questions and comments, will become a matter of public record.

Prior to the virtual meeting, the public is encouraged to review the project website [here](#).

Residents who participate in a related [online feedback survey](#) will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift card.

In addition to the community meeting, MCDOT hosted a pop-up event on Tuesday, March 14 at the Wheaton Metro Station and will host another pop-up event on Thursday, March 16 from 4 - 6 p.m. at University Boulevard and Arcola Avenue area bus stops, near Northwood High School.

Please note that the Montgomery County's Planning Department is also doing a corridor study of University Boulevard, separate from this project.

Interpreter services will be provided upon request, with five business days advance notice, by contacting Gary Erenrich at 240-777-7156 or gary.erenrich@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Release ID: [23-035](#)

March is Disability Awareness Month



In 1987, President Ronald Reagan designated the month of March as National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Montgomery County is committed to providing accessible transportation options for seniors and persons with disabilities. The County's transportation system is one of the best in the country. It consists of Ride On,

Metrobus, Metrorail, and Special Transportation programs such as Call-n-Ride, Same Day Access, Medicaid Transportation, and MetroAccess. We heard from you, and we've made major changes to meet your needs better and make your travel more convenient.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and directives from the Federal Transit Administration, Ride On will make every effort, to ensure that a person with a disability has access to, and benefits from, its services. Ride On will make reasonable modifications to its policies, programs, and procedures applicable to its transportation services, to avoid discrimination and ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.

Metrobus and Ride On Bus Service

- People with disabilities **ride free** in Montgomery County on Ride On & Metrobus.
- Buses are accessible to people with disabilities; they have ramps and can lower to the curb to make it easier to get on and off the bus.
- Call 311 for Ride On schedules and information.
- Call 202 637-7000 for Metrobus schedules and information

Call-n-Ride

mcdot.cnrorder@montgomerycountymd.gov

- Provides discounted taxicab service to eligible adults with disabilities.
- Travel can be for any purpose within Montgomery County and certain other areas for medical reasons.
- Mandatory participation by all Montgomery County taxi companies.
- Call 301 948-5409 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. for information or to apply.

Connect-A-Ride (CAR)

connectaride@AccessJCA.org

- CAR is a free information & referral service helping people with disabilities find transportation for medical services, errands, social activities and more.
- Links callers with public, private, and volunteer services.
- Assist callers with applications for transportation programs like Call-n-Ride and Metro Access
- Call 301 738-3252 Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Operated by Jewish Council of the Aging in partnership with Montgomery County Government.

Escorted Transportation

connectaride@AccessJCA.org

- Available for essential Medical appointments for individuals who require an escort due to a disability.
- Customers contribute to the cost of service based on individual income levels.
- Program funded by Montgomery County through Jewish Council for the Aging's Connect-A-Ride program.
- Call 301 738-3252 Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. for more information about the program.

Transportation Network Directory for People with Disabilities

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/tnd

- Explore transportation options with this detailed guide to public, private, and non-profit transportation services.
- Designed by The Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities.
- Call 240 777-1246 to request a hard copy of this publication.

Metro Access

<https://www.wmata.com/service/accessibility/metro-access/>

- MetroAccess is a shared -ride , door-to door service for persons with disabilities that cannot use public transportation
- Conditionally certified MetroAccess users ride free on Metro-rail, Metrobus and Ride On.
- Call 202 962.2700 and press 5 for program eligibility and information.

Medicaid Transportation

medicaidtransportationa@montgomerycountymd.gov

- Provides free transportation for Medicaid -covered necessary appointments for qualifying disabled residents.
- Recipient cannot have any other means of transportation.
- Call 240 77-5890 for information and eligibility screening.

Transportation to Recreation

- Curb-to-curb transportation available for County residents 55 and over to Senior Centers and some-Community Centers.
- Service is free for those living within the service areas of their center.
- Call 240 777-4925 to request service or information.

Taxi Services available in the county:

- Action Taxi: 301-840-1000.
- Anytime Taxi: 301-637-9292 or anytimeuniontaxi.com/index.html
- Barwood Taxi: 301 984-1900 or barwoodtaxi.com
- Regency Taxi: 301-990-9000 or regencytaxi.com

Montgomery County Holding ‘Shout Out to Your Bus Driver’ Contest During March to Promote Transit Driver Appreciation



The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is promoting this year's Transit Driver Appreciation Day on Saturday, March 18 with a month-long social media contest.

During March, Ride On bus riders are asked to “Give a Shout Out” to their bus operators with a Twitter, Facebook or Instagram post detailing how they were served well by their bus driver.

“Shout Out to Your Bus Driver” posts should use the hashtag #TransitDriverAppreciation and tag @RideOnMCT and @MCDOTNow. The posts will be entered into a weekly raffle for a prize pack. Entries that mention a driver's name will also qualify the driver for entry in one of three raffles for a gift card.

Riders that do not use social media can email a thank you message to mcdot.social@montgomerycountymd.gov to be entered in the drawing. Entries may be publicly shared.

MCDOT will also highlight transit drivers in newsletters and on social media platforms throughout March. Residents are asked to help promote social media posts with likes and shares.

“Our transit drivers are essential to the mobility, safety and economic vitality of thousands of Montgomery County families,” said County Executive Marc Elrich. “These employees do an amazing job serving our communities and ensuring that Ride On services are available, dependable and equitable. I want to personally thank each operator for their professionalism and dedication to their craft and our County. We are grateful for their talents and appreciative of their commitment to exemplary service to Ride On customers.”

Prize drawings will be held weekly on Friday mornings of the following week. The first winner will be announced on Friday, March 17, followed by winner announcements on March 24 and March 31. All winners will be notified via direct message on their social media accounts or by email. The contest is open to riders 18 and older. Winners must live or work within Montgomery County and have 10 days once notified to claim their prize. Prize packs include SmartTrip cards and various promotional items.

“We are so thankful for the amazing work our bus operators do each day to keep our County residents moving,” said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. “I encourage riders to take the time to thank their bus driver. It means a lot to them. They work hard every day to provide the great public service our department has become known for.”

A Family Affair – Interview with the Wells Family



Jacqueline Wells – Mom



Lincoln Wells – Son



Leroy Wells – Dad

A very special thank you to the Wells family for 56 plus years of combined service and counting!

How long have you worked for Ride On and what year did you start?

- Leroy Wells (father): I've worked as a Bus Operator for Ride On for 24 years; I started in 1998.
- Jacqueline Wells (mother): I've worked as a Bus Operator for Ride On for 24 years; I started in 1998.
- Lincoln Wells (son): I've worked as a Bus Operator for Ride On for 8 years; I started in 2014.

How did you learn about Ride On and what made you chose Ride On versus other places?

- Leroy Wells (father): Ride On was the only reliable form of transportation I had to travel to my two jobs. I chose Ride On versus other places because my spouse worked there and received a good benefits package.
- Jacqueline Wells (mother): Ride On was the only reliable form of transportation that my family used daily to get to and from work, school, church, doctors' appointments, and grocery shopping. I chose to work at Ride On versus other places because of the benefits, job security and referral by current bus operators while I was a passenger.
- Lincoln Wells (son): I learned about Ride On from the first day I migrated to America as a child and every day to get to and from school and my part-time jobs. I chose to work at Ride On versus other places because my parents told me of the flexibility, benefits, upward mobility, and work-life balance available.

What routes do you drive?

- Leroy Wells (father): 55, 61, 100
- Jacqueline Wells (mother): 49, 55, 57, 59, 61, 64, 100
- Lincoln Wells (son): 46, 48, 49, 57, 61, 78, 90, 100

What is the best part of your job?

- Leroy Wells (father): The best part of my job is the customers. I enjoy driving the Ride On Bus throughout Montgomery County and meeting new people daily.
- Jacqueline Wells (mother): The best part of my job is being a resource in the community to assist passengers in efficiently navigating the Ride On Bus transit system.
- Lincoln Wells (son): The best part of my job is knowing that residents depend on me to get them to work, home, school and houses of worship in a safe and timely manner.

How has Ride On changed over the years from a bus operators perspective?

- Leroy Wells (father): Ride On now offers students, Seniors & Persons with Disabilities free rides throughout the transit system. Ride On has improved its

technology on its buses and added rush hour, limited stops routes to reduce commuter traffic and time.

- Jacqueline Wells (mother): Ride On expanded the number of bus depots to improve transportation service in Montgomery County, modernized its fleet of buses to cleaner and energy efficient fuel sources.
- Lincoln Wells (son): Ride On has improved passenger experience by providing charging ports and free-Wi-Fi on buses. Digital applications are available to the community to bring transparency & reliability to our service. Continuous improvement to expand bus route coverage to new communities and increase hours of service to areas.

Montgomery County's Smart Energy Depot



The Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot was completed in Fall 2022, a first-of-its-kind integration of microgrid and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, delivering sustainability, reliability and resilience for Montgomery County's public transportation system. The Silver Spring depot is the largest solar bus charging infrastructure project in the United States and will supply renewable energy to Ride On's growing electric bus fleet.

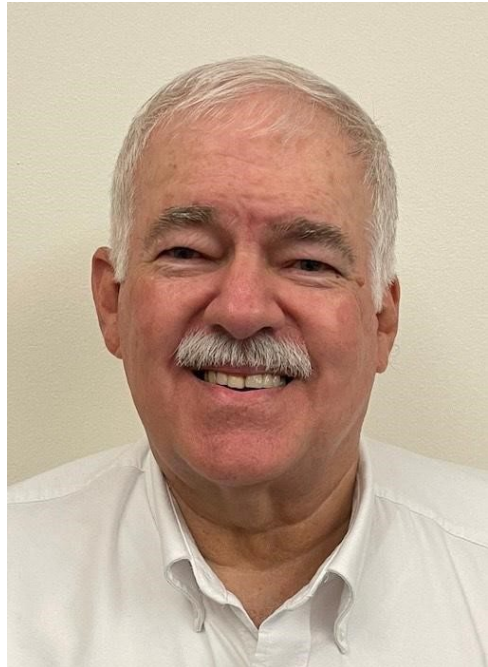
"This project has been garnering attention nationally because it is innovative, groundbreaking, and will help us achieve our ambitious climate action plan to reduce all carbon emissions by 2035," said County Executive Elrich. "Transportation is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas. We are leading by example by going emission-free. We are the third nationally to have solar-powered charging stations for our buses

and we are the largest so far. We should be able to fill these charging stations with 70 electric buses by 2026. We are well on our way to our goal of an emissions-free fleet by 2035 and improving the County's resilience.

"MCDOT has developed a Bus Transition Plan to ensure the current 400-bus fleet is on track to become a zero-emissions fleet by 2035. The plan is flexible and will adjust for new technology as it becomes available," said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. As of February 2023, 10 new electric buses have joined Ride On's bus fleet. Each bus is approximately four to five times more efficient than diesel buses.

An Interview with TAG Member Scott Buehler, Ph.D.

The Transit Advisory Group (TAG) was created in 1997 by the Division of Transit Services. TAG is a consumer advocacy group that serves as an advisory board for the Division of Transit Services and provides feedback on Ride On policies and programs, passengers' and community needs. They are an important source of information and suggestions for improvements and new ideas. TAG also serves as the eyes and ears of Ride On management. TAG consists of 14 Montgomery County volunteers committed to serving a two-year term. In addition to these residents, three Ride On operators also serve on the group. The group meets 3 – 4 times a year.



How long have you been riding with Ride On and what year did you begin?

I started riding around 2013. I still had a car then. However, the bus was so convenient to get to my work that I eventually gave up my car and now use Ride On consistently.

Why did you or your family select Ride On to begin your public transit experience?

I noticed there was a route that stopped just steps from my apartment building and dropped me steps from my work in about 15 minutes. The service was so reliable I no longer needed a car.

What routes have you ridden the most over the years and for what reasons?

I ride the 45 almost daily to work. For shopping or other interests, I might choose 55, 56, Q2, 301 to Glenstone Museum, 46, or Ride extRa to Gaithersburg.

What do you like the most about your Ride On experiences?

The buses are comfortable, the drivers are considerate when it comes to older riders, and the routes are designed to cover most any destinations you can think of with at most one transfer.

How has Ride On changed over the years from a rider's perspective?

It has been terrific to see progress toward electric vehicles. There are some upgraded stops with shelter from the weather and charging ports. The availability of WiFi helps riders as well as those using the RideOn app to track bus progress.

How did riding change during the pandemic?

During the pandemic, especially for those of us who are considered “essential workers,” Ride On has been a lifeline. The reduced fees and service reliability was very much appreciated whether that was expressed or not.

What other family members use the Ride On system and for what purposes?

Travel to school and after-school sports has been vital for so many families!

What recommendations do you have for Ride On?

Keep up the great work! The county's investment in Ride On is well managed and a very valuable asset. It supports people taking them to jobs, schools, shopping, and provides warm travel during the winter. It participates in connecting the county as a community without judgement or favor. It adds value and resilience to the citizens.

How do you view your role as a Transit Advisory Group (TAG) member?

I am impressed every time TAG meets, to hear the personal experiences of members. The administration is receptive to ideas, recommendations, and even the occasional criticism. They respond thoughtfully and take our feedback to heart. I enjoy hearing about the future plans and the roll-out of new services whether they impact me or not. I see how Ride On responds to needs across the entire county.

What have you learned the most as a TAG member?

I am constantly surprised to compare the enormously complex needs of a public transportation operation and seeing the efficiency and effectiveness of the people leading the effort. From the very beginning I have had the sense they accomplish all these goals on what seems like a modest budget. The people who make up the leadership are reflected in the service we see as riders.

We are currently recruiting high school students and disabled riders. Please email your interest to RideOn.CustomerService@montgomerycountymd.gov

Of Note

Ride On Reimagined

The Ride On Reimagined study is a comprehensive review of Montgomery County's bus system that will have the primary goal of recommending system-wide changes that address the current and future needs of the community it serves for both Ride On and Metrobus services. This study will take an in-depth look at Montgomery County's existing and planned transit systems, including Metrobus services that operate within the County limits and the future Purple Line. The study will also provide an opportunity to guide the future direction of Ride On through data analysis and community engagement. To learn more about the Ride On Reimagined study, visit [Ride On Reimagined - Montgomery County Division of Transit Services \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/RideOnReimagined).

Additional Flash Routes Coming Soon

The Flash is a limited-stop, branded bus service currently planned for 5 corridors within Montgomery County. The Flash currently operates on Colesville Rd/Columbia Pike (US 29) from Silver Spring Transit Center to Briggs Chaney and Burtonsville, with stops along the way. It runs every 15 minutes all day and more frequently during rush hour. The Flash expansion project will transform mobility options by connecting riders to activity and employment centers, improving passenger transit mobility, and making bicycle and pedestrian improvements along the corridors that will make it easier and safer to get to Flash stations. Updates on Flash services can be found at [Ride the Flash - MCDOT Montgomery County, MD \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/RideTheFlash).

Flex Service

MCDOT's on demand transit service helps you get around in defined Rockville and Glenmont/Wheaton zones. Ride On Flex has no fixed stops or fixed schedules – it comes when you make a reservation for a ride during regular service hours. Download the Ride On Flex app for free from the Apple or Google store or use the call center option at 240-301-3842. Call Center hours are 6 am to 7 pm, Monday - Friday. Rides can only be booked during the hours of operation in your selected zone. The Flex service has 2 zones: Rockville, which runs Monday - Friday, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, and Glenmont/Wheaton, which runs Monday - Friday, 6 to 9 am & 3:30 to 7:00 pm. Best of all, you pay only standard Ride On fare to ride Flex—just \$1! The Flex won the 2020 National Association of Counties (NACo) Innovation Award for the incredible value it provides.

Free COVID Taxi

MCDOT is providing FREE Taxi service to COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites to pick up N95 masks and at-home testing kits, for residents 65+ and residents with disabilities. To schedule a trip, call Connect-A-Ride at 301-738-3252 to get your free taxi code. Then call one of the following taxi services: Action Taxi 301 840-1000, Anytime Taxi: 301-637-9292 or Regency Taxi 301-990-9000 to schedule your trip.

Free Travel Training Workshop Gets 50+ Comfortable with Public Transportation on Thursday, March 30 in Wheaton

Travel Training is a *free* half-day workshop from [Connect-A-Ride](#) is designed to help residents 50+ gain confidence in taking public transportation. The workshop includes classroom training, a trip on a Ride On bus, a visit to a Metro station and a one-station round-trip train ride. The workshop takes about three hours.

Advance registration is required by calling 301-738-3252 or emailing connectaride@accessjca.org.

View the program flyer for dates and registration information [here](#).

Save the Date: GreenFest to be Held Over Two Days on Saturday, April 23 and Sunday, April 24

Montgomery County GreenFest is the largest annual environmental festival in Montgomery County and is expanding to two events this year.

[Greenfest in the Gardens](#) - **Saturday, April 23**, will be held at Brookside Gardens in Wheaton from **11 am to 4 pm**. This event will focus on protecting and preserving the natural environment and will highlight food consumption and composting, clean water, biodiversity, sustainable gardening and environmental justice.

[Greenfest in the City](#) - **Sunday, April 24**, will be held at 2425 Reddie Drive in Wheaton from **12 to 5 pm**. This event will focus on energy consumption, home and appliance efficiency, recycling, transportation and electric vehicles.

Plan to stop by MCDOT's booth at both locations to learn about the department's [green initiatives](#).

Learn more at montgomerycountygreenfest.org.

For the most up-to-date service information, riders should follow @RideOnMCT on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#). Additional information is available at RideOnBus.com, by subscribing to receive email alerts at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/govdelivery, or texting MONTGOMERY RIDEON to 468311 to receive text alerts.

For information on MCDOT programs and services visit montgomerycountymd.gov/mcdot, follow @MCDOTNow on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) and [subscribe](#) to MCDOT's "Go Montgomery!" newsletter.